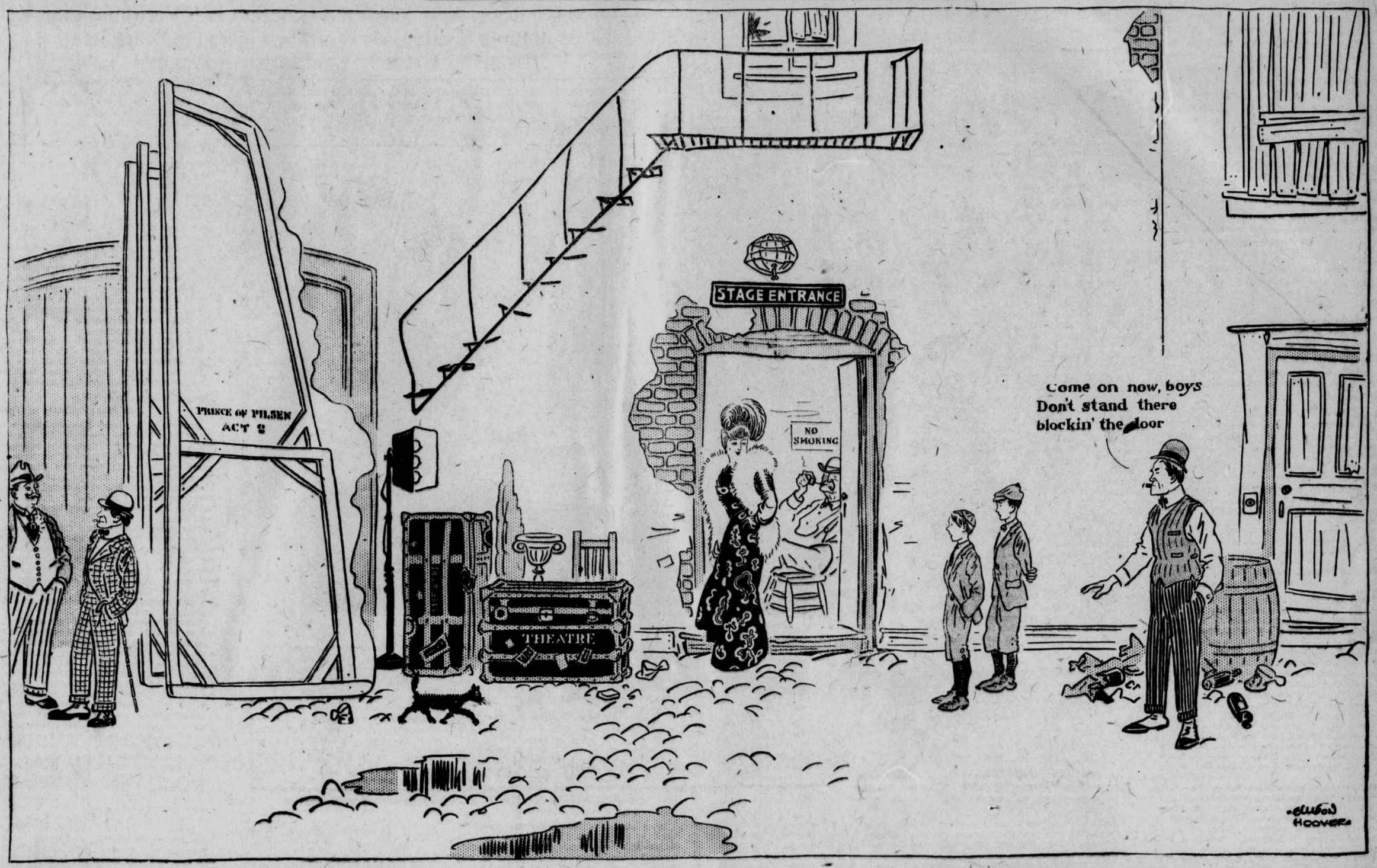
WHEN WERE THE GOOD OLD DAYS?

Their First Night at the Stage Door



Long Distance Commercial Flying Record Made By British

Twelve European Countries Visited in Sixteen Flying Days and Average Speed of Ninety Miles an Hour Maintained by Pilot and Two Passengers, One of Them "The Mysterious American"

Special Correspondence to THE NEW YORK HERALD:
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ALL honors for long distance commercial flying are accorded by aviation circles in Europe to the De Haviland-9 for a successful tour of twelve European countries in three weeks without accident. Pilot Alan J. Cobham has just given his report after travelling 4,500 miles since August 25. In sixteen flying days he averaged ninety miles an hour and three hours a day without a single forced landing and crossed some of the most treacherous terrain in Europe.

In Norway he had to watch his water for fear it would freeze, and ten days later, near Vienna, the atmosphere was so light with heat that he had to wait until late afternoon before he could get off the ground. The ship he brought back was the same he started with except a new wheel replaced after a tire blowout and a new tail skid, made necessary by excessive wear on the original skid. The most serious trouble he had was a slight oil leak, which disturbed the ignition, but not seriously enough to interrupt the journey.

Purpose of Flight Was To Map Commercial Ways

There is nothing in the annals of civil aviation to compare with this trip. The idea was to map out courses and mark aerodromes for commercial air routes, but some splendid records were established in the performance. For instance, in the next to the last leg of the journey Cobham flew from Nimes, France, to Paris in one hop, a distance of 720 kilometers, which was covered in 4 hours and 40 minutes. French officials at the Nimes field told him he could not do it, and it had not been done before.

With Cobham were two passengers, Harry Fox, manager of the Air Express Company's branch in Paris, and Lucien Sharpe of Providence, R. I., formerly a member of the firm of Brown & Sharpe of that city. Fox, a keen little Englishman, who has been blazing commercial routes for two years, planned the trip to broaden the scope of his company's work, and went along to prove to himself that flying was a safe and comparatively economical means of rapid transportation. Sharpe is now a resident of Paris and an enthusiast of aviation. According to Fox, flying is Sharpe's hobby, and he never misses an opportunity to take an interesting trip. He went as a passenger for his own pleasure.

Sharpe's presence in the plane caused much amusing speculation in various countries, particularly Germany, on his identity. Fox said the American kept quiet through modesty and tried to avoid publicity. In Berlin Sharpe was thought to be J. Pierpont Morgan, and after that everywhere the plane stopped attempts were made to identify Sharpe as Morgan. Fox believes that the mistake originally occurred when Sharpe received through a Berlin bank a big check from his bankers in Paris, the Morgan-Harjes Company. This made certain German financiers suspicious that Sharpe was on a big financial deal and travelling by plane to make better time. But Fox ridiculed any mystery about his passenger, saying he had known the American for some months and that he had very little time during the journey to transact important business.

Cobham is an English pilot with a good war record. He took an ordinary DH-9 with a Siddley-Puma 240 horse-power engine and a four blade propeller. This, he thinks, is a better "prop" than the two blade for flying under the conditions he expected to meet. For the comfort of the passengers during the long journey the plane was equipped with a muffling exhaust, which ran the whole length of the fuselage. In Paris Cobham picked up Fox and Sharpe, the latter occupying the seat in front of the pilot's cockpit and Fox sitting behind. They first flew to Brussels and then went on to Amsterdam, where they spent the first night. From there their itinerary was: Bremen, Hamburg, Copenhagen, Stockholm, Orebro, Christiania, back to Copenhagen, Berlin, Warsaw, Prague, Vienna, Klagenfurt, Venice, Brascia, Milan and, passing over Genoa and Nice, Nimes, Paris and London. Cobham returned in excellent condition, and at the aerodrome to-day he was studying maps to start within two days for Madrid to deliver a DH to a Spanish firm.

The original plan was to visit Budapest and Constantinople also, but trouble on the Austrian frontier forced a change in the route.

During all this flying Cobham made only one unscheduled landing. That was in Sweden, when he ran into a hailstorm and landed for half an hour to let the storm pass.

From a commercial point of view the journey was, according to Fox, a great success because he says it has put his company in a position to take orders to convey passengers by air to any capital in Europe outside Russia. He was also able to make some interesting observations on civil flying in other countries.

"Of all the countries we visited," he said, "Germany was by far the most advanced in commercial flying and the most enthusiastic about it. Although they are operating under the annoying condition of dilapidated planes, they are doing admirably well, and I found them most anxious to cooperate with us in linking up air routes. We plan regular trips to Berlin and Warsaw, with German companies taking over passengers at the French or Dutch frontier and vice versa. I am convinced this will work out admirably and we will be able to insure fast service at reasonable rates.

"In the spring we plan to open a service between London and Constantinople—a two days' service, with only one stop, and that at Vienna. Within the next few months commercial flying will accomplish such marvels of quick transportation in Europe that the travelling public will be astonished.

"Of course, the Dutch are doing big things along these lines. The Swedes and Norwegians are also going ahead rapidly. The airplane, however, is not practical in Sweden because there are so few possible landing places. The Swedes are, therefore, developing the seaplane. With their coast line and their numerous lakes comfortably scattered the seaplane is safer for commercial work than the airplane.

"The only discouraging capital we visited was Warsaw. The Poles are doing nothing to advance commercial flying and their spirit is hopeless. We do not expect any helpful cooperation from Poland.

"The Austrians are keen, but they are hopelessly handicapped, because they have no planes and cannot build them under the terms of the treaty. They are keeping up as best they can their old military aerodromes, and they were very glad to see us. In fact, we were heartily welcomed everywhere except in Poland. The Germans and Austrians treated us most courteously, and we were immensely bucked up by their receptions. The Italians are also, of course, keen about commercial flying. But Italy offers a problem because of its mountainous country. I believe that in Italy we will have to map our routes along the coast line. These will not be the most direct routes, but they will be safer."

Cobham said his worst "hop" was from Austria to Venice. The clouds were low over the Alps, and he was forced to descend and travel for several miles through a valley, with cliffs rising on either side. He said he did not have room to turn around and there was no place to land. "It was a bit uncomfortable for a time," he said, "but we carried on and finally got out."

From Stockholm to Orebro the trio had a pleasant experience with an English promoter named Capt. Saunders. Some months previously Capt. Saunders had settled at Orebro with an Avry and built his own aerodrome there. He had hoped to promote civil flying in the neighborhood. When he heard the DH-9 was passing through he wired Fox and extended an invitation to visit him at Orebro. Fox and Cobham were anxious to see their countryman, but were in doubt about finding the field, when out of the clouds ahead of them came an Avry, and Capt. Saunders escorted them back to his home. They remained over night, and the next day the Captain accompanied them along their route for several miles.

Trip of Three Weeks Cost Less Than by Rail

Fox was pleased with an incident that happened between Milan and Nimes. His wife and children were stopping in the mountains near the Italian frontier, and from the air the flyers spotted the house and came so low that Fox dropped a letter to his wife telling her that they were successfully concluding their journey. When he arrived in Paris the next day he found a telegram waiting for him from his wife saying she had found the letter and congratulating him.

Fox estimated the cost of the entire trip at about £700 and pointed out that it could not have been done by train as cheaply as that. He said they travelled as rapidly as possible, but did not sacrifice their comfort. He says he is now prepared to book air trips at a few hours' notice for any point in Europe for one, two or three passengers at a rate of £9 an hour—a flying hour. This puts commercial aviation in Europe on a new basis. It becomes an established business venture.

Columbia Linguist Now in Diplomatic Post

BY the appointment of Prof. John Dyneley Prince, professor of Slavonic languages at Columbia University, as the new United States Minister to Denmark, President Harding is following out the policy established by him since taking office with regard to the foreign service, namely, that diplomatic posts should be occupied only by those especially qualified to deal with great international issues through familiarity with the characteristics and, if possible, the language of the country to which they have been assigned.

Prof. Prince is more than ordinarily well equipped for his task of representing this country at the Danish court, for he not only speaks the Scandinavian languages perfectly but, possessed as he is of nearly every tongue spoken abroad, he will find good use for his knowledge in a country as closely in touch with continental Europe as Denmark. It is still fresh in mind how Copenhagen focused all European happenings during the great war. During the present reconstruction period the Danish capital plays a no less important role as a centre for information.

"I am especially pleased with my appointment to Denmark," Prof. Prince said in discussing the new labors before him, "as I have had a lifelong love for the Scandinavian North. Their languages, the general tone of these sturdy nations toward world politics, as well as their internal affairs, have always appealed to me strongly.

"I have a special sentimental reason for being glad that I am to be sent to Denmark, as part of my own family originally came to America from that part of England settled by King Canute's Danes. In fact, my very name 'Dyneley' means 'Danelaw,' a name given to these settlements by the early English.

Much to Learn There, He Says, And Will Study Early History

"I am therefore going to Denmark with the hope of learning much of that country's early history and ancient inscriptions. I shall hope to make friends at once with the authorities on this subject in the University of Copenhagen, with which Columbia University has had the friendliest relations for many years."

It may be stated that, graduated from Columbia University in 1888, Prof. Prince spent his last two years in the college as an ardent student of the Scandinavian languages and literatures under the late Prof. Hjalmar Hjorth Boyesen, a distinguished authority, who not only won fame as an expositor of Scandinavian culture in America but also as a Norwegian litterateur of note.

Directly following his graduation Prof. Prince went as assistant to Dr. John P. Peters, director of the University of Pennsylvania's expedition to southern Babylonia to excavate for Babylonian antiquities. During this period he acquired the Turkish and Bulgarian languages, and while on the expedition was given charge of the party's troop of twenty-five Turkish cavalry which guarded the caravan across the desert from Aleppo to Bagdad.

In order to specialize in Semitic languages he went to the University of Berlin in 1888, where he spent two semesters under the tutelage of Profs. Sachau and Schrader. He then became a student at Johns Hopkins University under Prof. Paul Haupt, where in 1892 he took the degree of doctor of philosophy, after having been a fellow. Prof. Prince was appointed professor of Semitic languages at New York University in 1893, which post he held until 1902, after having been dean of the graduate school for five years during this period.

Prof. Prince was then called to Columbia University as professor of Semitic languages in cooperation with Prof. Richard Gottheil. During this tenure of office in Columbia he specialized in cuneiform, and he has published many articles on the Sumerian language problem, the pre-Semitic idiom of the Euphrates Valley, and one book on this subject, "Materials for a Sumerian Lexicon," which has attracted attention throughout the world of Oriental scholars. He also published his "Commentary on the Book of Daniel," which discusses at length the Babylonian connection of the Biblical prophet Daniel.

Through his extended and intimate acquaintance with American political affairs Prof. Prince naturally has acquired also a considerable knowledge of international happenings. While professor at Columbia he was elected on the Republican ticket to the New Jersey State Assembly in 1906, and in 1907 was Advisory Commissioner to the New Jersey Crime Commission. In 1908 he was reelected to the Assembly, of which body he became Speaker in 1909, and he was elected to the New Jersey Senate in the same year, where he sat as Senator for Passaic county through 1912. He was elected president of the New Jersey Senate in the latter year and served most of that year as Acting Governor of New Jersey during the absence of Gov. Wilson on his Presidential campaign. During all this period Prof. Prince was able to continue his work at Columbia without a break.

Founded Slavonic Department At Columbia University in 1915

In 1915, at the suggestion of President Nicholas Murray Butler, Prof. Prince resigned as professor of Semitic languages and founded the Slavonic department at Columbia under the title of professor of Slavonic languages. From a small class of some half a dozen students in Russian, Prof. Prince has succeeded in broadening this work so as to include not merely the Russian language and literature but also Polish, Czech, Slovak, Serb and, this late year, Bulgarian, with an average enrolment of from 200 to 300 students. There are now six specialized assistants in this work under Prof. Prince, headed by Dr. Clarence A. Manning, who will take charge of the department during the absence of its head. The Slavonic department has for the last two years also administered courses in Chinese and Japanese, pending the organization of this work into separate departments.

During his entire career Prof. Prince has made his recreation the study of the eastern Algonquin Indian languages, especially the Passamaquoddy-Malicite of Maine and New Brunswick, Canada, where he has spent many summers. He has published in this field many articles as well as a grammar and texts of the Passamaquoddy tribe.